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GRAPHIC PEN PICTURES OF EARLY TIMES.

REMINISCENCES OF THE SIXTIES.

BY R. M. WRIGHT.

(Continued.)

One time before the Fort was established, we had to abandon a big Concord coach at the foot of "Nine Mile Ridge," on account of the muddy condition of the trail, and went on to the "stage station" with a light spring wagon. On the way we met a band of friendly Indians who were going to Fort Larned, and we told them to haul the coach in. Of course, they didn't follow the trail, but struck across the country on to Pawnee Fork. After a long time had elapsed, "Little Raven," the chief, rode into the Fort and told us he had left the coach twenty miles up the creek, and bles't if he could get it any farther, as he had pulled the tails out of nearly every one of his herd of ponies getting it that far. You see their method of hauling the coach was by tying it to the tails of their ponies.

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The creeks, when the Fort was first started, were all heavily wooded with hackberry, ash, box-elder, cottonwood, and elm. We cut fifteen hundred cords of wood almost in one body, on a little creek six miles north of the Fort, all hackberry. There were a good many thousand cords cut on "Saw-Log," which stream is properly the South Fork of the Pawnee, but the soldiers would go out to the old "Hays Crossing," chop down a big tree, hitch a string of large mules to it, haul it up on the bank near the ford, and after stripping off its top and limbs leave its huge trunk there, in consequence of which, thousands of immense logs accumulated there, making the place look as if a saw-mill had been established, and these great trunks were saw-logs ready to be cut into lumber. The early buffalo hunters called the creek "Saw-Log" which name it bears to this day.

Just above the "crossing" was a great resort and covert for elk. I have seen as many as fifty in a single band at one time. Every spring we would go out there and capture young ones. That region was also the heart of the buffalo range, as well as that of the antelope. I have seen two thousand of the latter graceful animals in a single bunch, driven right into Fort Dodge against the buildings, by a storm. I have shot buffalo from the walls of my corral at the Fort; and so many of them were there in sight it appeared impossible to count them. It is a difficult problem to determine just how many buffalo I have seen at one time. I have traveled through a herd of them for days and days; never out of sight of them; in fact it might correctly be called one continuous gathering of the great shaggy monsters. I have been present at many a cattle "round-up," and have seen ten thousand head in one herd and under complete control of their drivers; but I have seen herds of buffaloes so immense in numbers, that the vast aggregation of domestic cattle I have mentioned, seemed as none at all compared with them.

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Just before I moved from Aubrey, J. F. Bigger and I had a sub-contract to furnish hay at Fort Lyon, seventy-five miles west of Aubery. While we were preparing to move up to go to work, a vast herd of buffalo stampeded through our "range" one night, and took off with them about half of our work cattle. The next day, the stage driver and conductor told us they had seen a few of our cattle about twenty-five miles east of Aubery. This information gave me an idea in which direction to hunt for them, and I started after the missing beasts, while my partner took those that remained and a few wagons, and left for Fort Lyon. I will interpolate here the statement, that the Indians were supposed to be peaceable, although small war parties of young men, who could not be controlled by their chiefs, were continually committing depradations, while the main body of the savages were very uneasy, expecting to go out any day. In consequence of this threatening aspect of affairs, there had been a brisk movement of the troops stationed at the various Military Posts, a large number of whom were supposed to be on the road from Denver to Fort Lyon.

I took along with me some ground coffee, filled my saddle-bags with jerked buffalo and hard-tack, a belt of cartridges, my rifle and six-shooter, my field glass, blankets, and was ready for any emergency. The first day out I found a few of the lost cattle, and placed them on the river bottom, which I continued to do as fast as I recovered them, for a distance of about eighty-five miles down the Arkansas, where I met a wagon train. The men told me I would find several more with a train that had made the crossing of the Cimarron the day before. I came up to this train in a day's ride south of the river, got my cattle, and started next morning for home. I picked up my cattle on the river where I had left them, as I went along, and having made a tremendous day's travel, about sundown concluded I would go into camp. I had hardly stopped before the cattle began to drop down, so completely tired out were they, as I thought.

Just as it was growing dark, I happened to look toward the west, and I saw several fires on a big island, near what was called the "Lone Tree," about a mile from where I had halted for the night. Thinking they were the camp fires of the soldiers I had heard were on the road from Denver, and anticipating and longing for a good cup of coffee, as I had had none for five days, and besides feeling very lonesome, knowing too, the troops would be full of news, I felt good, and did not think or dream of anything else than my fond anticipations; in fact was so wrapped up in my thoughts, I was literally oblivious of my surroundings. I was wild to hear the news, and wanted a good supper, which I knew I would get in the soldiers camp.

The Arkansas was low, but the bank steep with high, rank grass growing to the very water's edge. I found a buffalo trail cut through the deep bank, very narrow and precipitous. Down this I went and arrived within a little distance of my supposed soldiers camp. When I got in the middle of a deep cut, I looked across to the island, and Holy Mother of Moses. I saw a hundred little fires, and something less than a thousand savages huddling around them.

I slid back off my horse, and by dint of great exertion worked him up the river bank as quietly and quickly as possible, then led him gently away out on the prairie. My first impulse was not to go back to the cattle; but we needed them very badly, so I concluded to return to them, put them all on their feet mighty lively without any noise, I can tell you. Then I started them, and Oh dear, I was afraid to tread on a weed lest it would snap and bring the Indians down on my trail. Until I had put several miles between them and me I could not rest easy for a moment; and it's God's truth, tired as I was, tired as was both my horse and the cattle, I drove them twenty-five miles before I halted. Then daylight was upon me, and I laid down and fell asleep. I was at what is known as Choteau's Island a once famous place on the "Old Santa Fe Trail."

Of course, I had to let the cattle and my horse rest and fill themselves until the afternoon, but I did not sleep any longer myself. As I thought it dangerous to remain too near the cattle, I walked up a big dry sand creek that ran into the river at that point, and after I had ascended it a couple of miles, found the banks very steep, in fact they rose to a height of eighteen or twenty feet, and were sharply cut up by narrow trails made by the buffalo.

The whole face of the earth was covered with buffalo, and they were grazing slowly toward the river. As it was a warm day, and getting on in the afternoon, all at once they became freightened at something, and stampeded pell-mell toward the very spot where I was. I quickly ran into one of the preciptious little paths and up on the prairie to see what had scared them. They were fairly making the ground tremble as in their mighty multitude they came on running at full speed, the sound of their hoofs resembling thunder, only a continuous peal. It appeared to me that they must sweep everything in their path, and for my own preservation I rushed under the creek bank. But on they came like a tornado, with one old bull in the lead. He held up a second to descend the deep narrow trail, and when he got half way down the bank I let him have it, I was only a few steps from him, and over he tumbled. I don't know why I killed him; out of pure wantonness I expect, or perhaps I thought it would freighten the others back. Not so, however, they only quickened their pace, and came dashing down in greater numbers. Dozens of them stumbled and fell over the dead bull; others fell over them. The top of the bank was actually swarming with them; they leaped, pitched and rolled down. I crouched as close to the bank as possible; but numbers of them just grazed my head knocking the sand and gravel in great streams down my neck; indeed I was half buried before the last one had passed. That old bull was the last buffalo I ever shot wantonly, excepting once from an ambulance to please a distinguished Englishman who had never seen one killed; then I did it only after his hard persuasion.

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The day after I arrived at home I was obliged to start for Fort Lyon with fourteen or fifteen yoke of cattle and four or five wagons. A Mr. Ward volunteered to accompany me, and let me say right here he was as brave a young man as it has ever been my fortune to know. He was "true blue," a "chip off the old block," a nephew of General Shelby, and he might well be proud of his pluck. I coupled all the wagons together, and strung all the fifteen yoke of oxen to them, and as young Ward could not drive cattle, he only went along for company, and to help me yoke up.

We made eighteen miles the first day, and stopped at "Pretty Encampment," one of the most celebrated camping places on the "Old Santa Fe Trail," located at the foot of "Salt Bottom." We yoked up next morning several hours before daylight, as the moon was shining brightly, and we wanted to cross the bottom before we ate our breakfast. A few miles from the head of the bottom the trails diverge; one cutting across the bluffs, the other following the Arkansas; we were on the lower one. Presently the stage came along, lumbering over the bluffs, stopped and called to us. I went to it, it was only a few hundred yards over to the other trail, when who should I see but my partner Mr. J. F. Bigger, and four or five other men in the coach besides the driver. They all at once cried out, Bigger leading, "Go back with us, go back with us, or you'll both be killed." I said: "Bigger, be a man; stop with us and defend your property, a lot of those cattle there belong to you, and besides you have a splendid rifle." He replied: "No, I must go to Aubrey to protect my wife and child." I answered him: "My wife and children are there too; in one of the strongest little Forts in the country; six or eight men with them and plenty of arms and ammunition; all the Indians on the plains can not take them." He said: "You don't know how many Indians there are; they stopped the coach, took what they wanted in the way of blankets and ammunition; two or three six-shooters they found on the front seat, besides other things." I asked him why didn't they take the two rifles, and he replied: "I reckon they would have done so, but we hid them." I said: "I wish to God they had. If you won't stop with us, loan us your gun, we have only one rifle and a six-shooter." He said: "No, leave the cattle and go back with us; they will be down on you in a little while." "Well, wait until I see Ward," I answered. "Be quick about it then."

I went back to Ward and I asked him what he wanted to do; I said: "You have nothing to gain, and all to lose; the people in the coach yonder, say there are several hundred Indians above the bend, and while they are not actually on the war path, they stopped the coach and robbed it; whipped the mules with their quirts untill they got them on the dead run, then fired at them, and shot several arrows into the coach; some are still sticking into the back of it. Ward asked me what I was going to do. I said that a man might as well be dead as to lose his property, and I proposed to stay with it; maybe we won't see an Indian. He replied: "I'm going to stay with you." "God bless you for it" said I "but it is asking too much of you." "Well, I'm going to stay anyhow."

I then motioned for the stage driver to go on, and he did so right quickly. The cattle had all laid down in the yoke while we had halted, but we soon hustled them up and started, feeling pretty blue. We first held a little consultation, and then moved up all the ammunition to the first wagon, on which Ward was to sit. I gave him the rifle, I had on a six-shooter and a belt full of cartridges, and we agreed to let the Indians take the grub and the blankets if they came, but that we would stay by our guns and ammunition. Ward said he would never get off the box containing the ammunition.

We had proceeded about two miles, were awfully tired and hungry, had just driven out of the road to make a temporary camp, congratulating ourselves that we had missed the Indians, when here they came, two on their ponies at first. I said to Ward that we could lick those two; they dare not tackle us, but we had better keep right on and not go into camp.

Ward raised his gun and motioned for them to keep off. They circled and went to the rear, when just over a little rise, the whole business of them poured. I pounded away and yelled at the cattle to keep them moving, but there were so many Indians they blocked the road and we came to a stand still. They swarmed all around us, and on the wagons but the front one, this Ward kept them off of. They took all of our grub and ropes, but nothing else. After stringing their bows and making lots of threats and bluffs at us, they dropped a little behind and we drove off and left them.

We hustled the cattle along for five or six miles, when we came to a good place to water. Ward run up on a bluff to see what had become of the savages, while I drove the cattle chained together to the river. Ward commenced to shout just as I reached the bank, the oxen got no water that day; I turned them around in a hurry, hitched on and started.

Ward said that the Indians were not more than three miles off, coming our way. We never made another halt until we were in sight of the lights on "Commissary Hill" at old Fort Lyon, which we reached about one o'clock that night. I reported to the commanding officer next morning, and we learned afterward, these Indians had been to Sand Creek to bury the bones of their dead who were killed in the Chivington fight several years before. Only a week after our escape, there was a general outbreak and war.

(To be Continued.)

COLLOQUIAL.

Interviews on Different Subjects.

DR. C. A. MILTON: The Boards of Health in many of the large cities are pursuing the proper course to stamp out germ diseases. My attention is directed to the orders regarding the prevention of spitting in public places—especially on streets and in assemblies. Some people may regard these orders an infringement on the personal rights of the people. If a board of health or municipality has a right to prescribe rules or regulations for the promotion of health, it has the right to follow such course in every respect that is necessary to obtain the end desired. The germs of disease are propogated by the sputum, particularly in tuberculous cases. The proposed reform in the habits of the people is a wise move. It is only a means of prevention in cases of consumption, and the remedy is not a cure. Diseases are carried in the air from dried sputa, and the proposed reform is directed more particularly against consumptive patients; but the plan carries with it a desirable reform in a disgusting habit, more conspicuous in America than in older countries. If the "hawking and spitting" so prevalentt in cities could be confined in private the nice sense of the people would not be offended. But it is time a move in the direction of confining the disposition of bodily filth was inaugurated.

Consumption and catarrh are more prevalent in America than in the older countries of the world, and I have no doubt, with the enforcement of rigid laws against public expectoration, these common diseases would in a measure be greatly ameliorated if not radically stamped out.

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J. H. CHURCHILL: While on a recent trip to Arizona, attending the Irrigation Congress, I had a talk with E. R. Moses, of Great Bend, and he promised me he would come to Dodge City, after his return from California, and give our people a little information on the operations of the several creameries now being carried on in Barton county. He may be here at some time in January. A public lecture from him on this subject would be the proper way to bring the matter before the people. It would take time to get these industries established, and a good deal of preliminary work must be done. Cows and cash will not be wanting—there will be an abundance of both to put the scheme in motion. Already about 200 cows are promised to the service of the first creamery; and the lowing of the yearling heifer is substantial proof that the principal material in the enterprise will not be a shortcoming. Alfalfa and cows may solve that problem of existence that has confronted the weary settler on this broad domain, and well nigh exhausted his hope for a future dependence. Our prosperous countries are those which depend on the product of the cow, and butter and cheese may become the staple product of Western Kansas. We have the grass, and why not utilize it.

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E. D. SWAN: I am in favor of the proposed scheme for a constitutional convention, and hope the fusion legislature will make the call, not that I want to put the state to the expense, but I am extremely anxious that a measure shall be devised that will annihilate the Pop party. The expense of submitting this matter to the people will run up into many thousands of dollars in the cost of publication and in the cost attending the election to vote on the proposition. If the Pop or fusion party could survive after this, it would be one of those mysterious things in life, of which only Kansas could sustain. But I imagine, as the time draws nigh, the proposed constitutional scheme will fall flat and become a reminiscence of the late campaign.

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J. J. SUMMERSBY: The creamery talk is all right, and we must keep at it until we accomplish the desired purpose. Nothing is gained without preliminary effort, and it is surprising what amount of talk and time is necessary to put a scheme like this into operation. It would appear that a campaign of education must be made before we can arouse that latent enterprise lying dormant in the average citizen. It is not altogether money that is required to give the enterprise an opportunity to materialize, as it is the inducements offered to encourage the undertaking. If our people will show a willingness to encourage an enterprise of this kind, there will be no lack of capital for the investment. It is true not every farmer could put 50 cows in a creamery pool, but even with ten cows a farmer or dairyman could realize a handsome profit, and sustain from this resource a small family. Make an estimate of the quantity of milk from any given number of cows, at 6 cents a gallon, furnished to a creamery; count cost of milk, feed for cows, and value of the calf product, and see what rich returns will come into your larder. It beats grain raising; and once established, the demand is as constant as the supply. This is preeminently a grazing country, and we ought to begin to adapt ourselves to circumstances; and in the language of the prophet Isaiah, cry out, like "the voice of him that crieth in the wilderness." "The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field."

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JOHN S. RUSH: One of the drawbacks to this part of the state is the remoteness to market; and this is a fact which is acknowledged as a detriment to producers; but I am reminded, with the abundant means of transportation, and the swiftness of travel, that time and space is no consideration. We need to apply to ourselves the proper uses of the facilities of production at hand. It costs more to ship grain to market than the same value of product in the fat steer. In view of this fact it is apparent that stock raising is of more importance than grain raising, and the cow and the hen are the economies we should cultivate. It will be no trouble to find a market for a carload of butter when we have once established a butter manufactory; and so it will be in the transportation of the product of the hen. A carload of eggs would find a ready market in the east at good prices. But when we produce in "dribs" we must sell in "dribs." Only last week a Pueblo merchant was in this city, looking for the purchase of 400 turkeys to supply the Pueblo market for Christmas. He was obliged to go farther east to make the purchase, because 400 turkeys could not be readily obtained here, though that number could have been had if a little more time had been given to make the demand upon the farmers. This is an instance of the disadvantages we are laboring under; and we cannot remedy this condition until we produce in larger quantities and establish a permanent market somewhere, where the demand is constant and prices good, and our supplies adequate.

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JERRY SHAW: I have made the run from Garden City to Dodge City, a distance of 50 miles, in 43 minutes; and consider that the proposed "fast run" from LaJunta to Dodge City, a distance of 202 miles, at a rate of 72 miles an hour, a feat easily accomplished. There are several engines on the division that can make this time. I am not anxious to try this experiment, but if I am put on the run I will go. There are some difficulties or discomforts or disadvantages, in dust and hot boxes, and a run like this would be disagreeable; but it would be attended with no more hardship or danger than a run of 40 miles an hour. The newspaper men who contemplate accompanying this fast train need have no fears or anxiety of the danger. In case of an accident, it will not make any difference whether you go to Heaven at the rate of 40 miles an hour or 72 miles an hour. You get there on time.

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W. J. FITZGERALD: A recent trip to Phoenix, Arizona, in attendance at the Irrigation Congress, was one of peculiar pleasure and agreeable surprise. We had been traveling all day through some uninviting country of barren desert, scant timber and desolate mountain, when we were suddenly ushered into a paradise, where verdure is as luxuriant as the tropical growth, and flower and fruit were in abundance. Just now, the valley of the Salt river is in its most productive season—the orange grove is yielding its product, and strawberries and other small fruits are plentiful. The snow-capped mountains afford a striking contrast to the verdure and loveliness of the valley. One can hardly realize what water and sun can do in the desert until he has made a personal observation.

There is a large waste of country as wild and weird as can be found, in the territories of New Mexico and Arizona, and part of California, that in 25 years will be as fruitful as the most productive regions of the Nile; and the problem of redeeming these wastes is one of those things American enterprise will take hold of and solve. The mountains are the storage places of the water that will afford the means of utilizing the rich soil that abounds, and water can be found in sufficient quantities to irrigate every available spot on the now seemingly irredeemable desert.

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GEO. T. TODD. The records of the Weather Bureau, at this station, show this December to be the warmest since the station was established. The mean temperature for December for 22 years, is 33 degrees—the mean temperature for this December is 40 degrees, 7 degrees above the average. There is no data to determine January weather by the records of December weather. In December, 1885, previous to the memorable blizzard in January following, the mean temperature was 37 degrees, 4 degrees above the average. Some colder weather has occurred in December and January previous to the blizzard of January 7th, 1886, but the conditions were somewhat different—there was less snow and wind. There are no conditions in the extreme northern regions indicating an hyperborean blast; and whatever changes of temperature may occur must be from local causes. But weather conditions are very uncertain. There is no telling what a day or night may bring forth.

SPEARVILLE SPLINTERS.

—The beginning of last week, the result of one days hunt, the Nimrods of our vicinity shipped one hundred jack rabbits as a contribution to the charity fund of Kansas City. To-day they are out again and hope to duplicate the number.

—On Tuesday of last week J. R. Baird and T. B. Stewart visited Victor Post G. A. R., at the Soldiers' Home for inspection, and report the Post very much alive and flourishing.

—Rob. Diehl, of Pueblo, Colo., has been home eating Christmas jim cracks from his mother's spoon.

—Miss Lou Shockley, daughter of Rev. H. M. Shockley, of Phillipsburg, Kan., is visiting this week with Miss Florence Leidigh. Also Mr. Fred Leidigh, of Hutchinson, is visiting his uncle's family here.

—Miss Brewington, of Larned, has been spending her holidays in Spearville renewing youthful acquaintances.

—Miss Davidson, of Rush Center, is holding Christmas carnival with her sister Mrs. H. V. Scandrett. Also Mr. Scandrett's mother is here and will doubtless spend the winter in Spearville.

Mrs. Yonkell, of Larned, is visiting her daughter Mrs. J. Prather, of our city.

—H. C. Nichols has assumed control of our Post Office and moved it across the street into his father's hardware store.

—Eugene and Ed. Quick, sons of J. S. Quick, who have been in Iowa the past summer, returned home about a week ago and expect to winter around the paternal hearth.

—Ben Lampe, one of the Santa Fe's boys from Dodge City, has been exhibiting as an altitudinarian around Spearville.

—Mr. and Mrs. I. V. Stewart celebrated the tenth anniversary of their marriage the 29th inst.

—Happy New Year! NIX.

A Gold Bug Celebration.

A Christmas celebration with "whisky on the side," is a unique affair in Christmas festivity in Kansas.

The men, women and children of Dudley Township, Haskell County, Kan., celebrated Christmas at the expense of Gen. Simon Bolivar Buckner, of Kentucky, late gold standard Democratic candidate for the vice presidency. Dudley Township has only six voters, but it is the only precinct in the United States that gave a majority for Palmer and Buckner, and a few days ago Gen. Buckner, sent to County Clerk Cave twenty-five gallons of old Kentucky whisky and check for $50, the same to be turned over to the Dudley Democrats for Christmas purposes. They resolved to give a big dinner in in the school house, and Mrs Mary Akers and Mrs. Sarah Henthorn were made a committee of arrangments. It was a royal spread of turkey, quail and venison, with plenty of whisky punch on the side. The entire township and many from the county seat were invited. Following the dinner the children were entertained and in the evening the grown folks danced.